

PORTRAIT OF AN AMERICAN CITY
VALERIE GULICK

OCTOBER 23, 1978
SERIFS 7 #4

HONOLULU: AN "EARTHLY PARADISE"
(INSERTS AVAILABLE IN TAPF LIBRARY)

TAPE: CUT ONE -- HAWAIIAN MUSIC, ESTABLISH, FADE UNDER AND OUT

NARR: THIS IS MUSIC THAT EVOKES VISIONS OF GRACEFUL DANCERS, THE
SMELL OF FLOWERS, THE TASTE OF PAPAYA FRUIT, THE SOUND OF
WAVES BREAKING ON A BEACH... THE MUSIC OF AN ISLAND STATE,
THE FIFTIETH STATE OF THE UNION...

TAPE: CUT TWO -- MAYOR FASI

"IF THERE EVER WAS A PARADISE AS DESCRIBED IN THE BIBLE
THIS HAS GOT TO BE THE PLACE -- THE CLIMATE, SCENERY,
FOLIAGE, CLEAN WATER, FINE PEOPLE...."

NARR: MAYOR FRANK F. FASI, MAYOR OF HONOLULU, CAPITAL OF THE
STATE OF HAWAII...

TAPE: CUT THREE -- FASI

"...HERE IN HAWAII NO ETHNIC OR RELIGIOUS GROUP IS IN
THE MAJORITY. EVERYBODY'S PART OF A MINORITY. I DON'T
THINK YOU CAN FIND ANY PLACE (ELSE) IN THE WORLD THAT CAN
BOAST OF THAT. AND AS A RESULT HERE IN HAWAII WE HAVE
LEARNED TO LIVE AND WORK AND PLAY TOGETHER BETTER POSSIBLY
THAN ANY OTHER AREA IN THE WORLD."

NARR: HONOLULU IS ON THE ISLAND OF OAHU IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN,
ONE OF THE EIGHT ISLANDS LYING MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND
MILES FROM THE UNITED STATES MAINLAND THAT COMPRISE THE
STATE OF HAWAII. HONOLULU LIES ON THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF
OAHU, THE GREEN KOOLAN MOUNTAINS RISING BEHIND. TO THE
WEST IS PEARL HARBOR AND TO THE SOUTHEAST IS BEAUTIFUL
WAKIKI BEACH BOUNDED ON THE FAR SIDE BY DIAMOND HEAD, AN
EXTINCT VOLCANO WHICH RESEMBLES A SLEEPING LION. THE
CLIMATE, WARMED BY THE SUN AND COOLED BY THE TRADE WINDS
RANGES IN HONOLULU FROM SEVENTY ONE TO EIGHTY DEGREES --

NARR: 21 TO 27 DEGREES CELSIUS -- AND MOST PEOPLE INCLUDING MAYOR
(CONT'D) FASI AGREE THAT THE CLIMATE ACCOUNTS IN LARGE PART FOR THE
RELAXED, EASY GOING WAYS OF THE ISLANDERS:

TAPE: CUT FOUR -- FASI

"I THINK POSSIBLY WITHOUT QUESTION (BECAUSE OF) THE CLIMATE
THEY'RE MORE EASY GOING. WE HAVE TOLERANCE THAT WE LIVE
EVERY DAY ONE WITH THE OTHER. WE DON'T JUDGE PEOPLE BY
THE COLOR OF THEIR SKIN, THEIR POLITICAL BELIEFS OR
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OR THE SHAPE OF THEIR EYES. THAT MAKES
US DIFFERENT."

NARR: HAWAII HAS A POPULATION OF EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND.
STATISTICALLY TEN PERCENT ARE PART-HAWAIIAN, DESCENDENTS
OF THE ORIGINAL SETTLERS WHO CAME TO THE ISLANDS FROM
POLYNESIA A THOUSAND YEARS AGO. FORTY PERCENT ARE NORTH
AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN CAUCASIANS WHO ARE EITHER IN-MIGRANTS
FROM THE MAINLAND UNITED STATES OR ARE DESCENDENTS OF THE
SEAFARERS, MERCHANTS, MISSIONARIES, AND PLANTATION LABORERS,
WHO CAME TO THE ISLANDS IN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES. CLOSE
TO HALF THE POPULATION IS OF ASIAN ORIGIN, CHINESE, JAPANESE
KOREAN AND FILIPINOS MANY OF WHOSE ANCESTORS CAME TO WORK
ON THE SUGAR PLANTATIONS OF HAWAII. OTHERS INCLUDING
INDOCHINESE HAVE COME MORE RECENTLY AS IMMIGRANTS. BUT
EVERYONE IN HAWAII CALLS HIMSELF HAWAIIAN, A PRACTICE
REFLECTING THE "ALOHA" SPIRIT THAT HAS ALWAYS CHARACTERIZED
THE HAWAIIAN PEOPLE. MAYOR FASI EXPLAINS WHAT THAT SPIRIT
MEANS TO HIM:

TAPE: CUT FIVE -- FASI

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T "I THINK THE ALOHA SPIRIT IS THE LOVE OF THE LAND, PROTECTION
OF THE LAND, SHARING WHAT YOU HAVE WITH OTHER PEOPLE,
WELCOMING THEM AS FRIENDS IN YOUR HOUSE, NOT LOOKING AT THE
COLOR OF THE SKIN BUT LOOKING AT THE INDIVIDUAL. I THINK
IF ANYONE HAS COME TO THE CONCEPT OF BROTHERLY LOVE, I THINK
THE HAWAIIANS HAVE."

NARR: EIGHTY PERCENT OF THE POPULATION OF HAWAII LIVES IN AND AROUND THE CAPITAL CITY OF HONOLULU ATTRACTED TO JOBS PROVIDED BY THE STATE'S TWO MAJOR INDUSTRIES, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND TOURISM. HONOLULU IS ALSO THE CROSSROADS OF TRANS-PACIFIC STEAMER AND AIR ROUTES, AND IN FACT WAS A MAJOR HARBOR LONG BEFORE BECOMING A CITY. ITS NAME EXPLAINS WHY -- HONOLULU IN HAWAIIAN MEANS FAIR HAVEN OR SAFE HARBOR.

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ALTHOUGH TODAY IT IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES, IT DID NOT ALWAYS HAVE THIS REPUTATION. JOHN WRIGHT, A HISTORIAN AT THE BISHOP MUSEUM IN HONOLULU, DESCRIBES THE FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE AMERICAN EXPLORER CHARLES WILKES WHEN HE VISITED HONOLULU IN 1840:

TAPE: CUT SIX -- WRIGHT

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"WHEN WILKES CAME HERE HE HAD EXPECTED TO FIND A PERFECT PARADISE AND IN HIS JOURNAL HE WROTE THAT HE WAS QUITE SHOCKED TO FIND HONOLULU WAS A RATHER DUSTY, WINDY PLAIN. HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT THERE WERE VERY FEW TREES. HE FURTHER NOTED THAT THE CITIZENS OF THE CITY DID NOT SEEM TO BE DISPOSED TO PLANT TREES AND VEGETATION, SO THE APPEARANCE OF THE CITY IS A LITTLE DIFFICULT TO VISUALIZE."

NARR: TODAY WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE CLIMATE AND TROPICAL FOLIAGE, DOWNTOWN HONOLULU LOOKS LIKE OTHER MODERN CITIES WITH ITS TALL BUILDINGS, BUILT HIGH BECAUSE LIMITED SPACE PERMITS NO OUTWARD EXPANSION. AND IT SHARES MANY OF THE PROBLEMS OF OTHER LARGE CITIES.

AS MAYOR OF HONOLULU, FRANK FASI HAS PLENTY TO SAY ON THAT SUBJECT:

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TAPE: CUT SEVEN -- FASI

"I HAVE THE SAME PROBLEMS ANY MAYOR HAS; NO MATTER WHERE HE IS, A MAYOR HAS THE SAME PROBLEMS. THE BIGGEST PROBLEM HE USUALLY HAS IS THAT HE DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO DELIVER THE SERVICES THAT PEOPLE DEMAND, TO GIVE PEOPLE THE PARKS AND RECREATIONAL SPACES THAT THEY NEED, EDUCATIONAL, WELFARE PROGRAMS THEY WANT, POLICE AND FIRE PROTECTION --

TAPE:
(CONT'D)

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PROBLEMS ARE THE SAME WORLDWIDE. IN MY TRAVELS THROUGHOUT
THE WORLD I'VE FOUND THAT ONE MAYOR'S HEADACHES ARE NOTHING
NEW TO ANOTHER MAYOR"?
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NARR: ONE OF HONOLULU'S MAJOR PROBLEMS IS TRAFFIC -- MORE CARS
AND TRUCKS THAN THE STREETS AND HIGHWAYS OF THE CITY CAN
COMFORTABLY ACCOMMODATE. A MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM WITH NO
ADDITIONAL HIGHWAYS MUST BE DEvised OR MAYOR FASI PREDICTS
THAT ALL TRAFFIC WILL ONE DAY COME TO A STANDSTILL.
OVERPOPULATION IS ANOTHER PROBLEM. IN THE LAST TWENTY-FIVE
YEARS THE NUMBER OF TOURISTS ANNUALLY HAS INCREASED FROM
ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND TO TWO MILLION. TOURISTS ARE WELCOMED
BY THE HAWAIIANS BUT TOO MANY, IMPRESSED BY THE CLIMATE,
PEOPLE AND BEAUTY, WANT TO RETURN AND LIVE. BECAUSE MOST
OF THEM COME FROM MAINLAND UNITED STATES IT IS NOT LEGALLY
POSSIBLE TO DISCOURAGE THEM AS RESIDENTS. AS A RESULT,
THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF HOUSING AND REAL ESTATE IS EXPENSIVE.
SOME HAWAIIANS FAVOR CUTTING DOWN ON TOURISM, BUT AS THAT
IS A MAJOR ECONOMIC FORCE IN THE STATE SUCH A SOLUTION
SEEMS UNLIKELY.

LIKE MANY OTHER CITIES HONOLULU HAS BEEN UNDERGOING URBAN
RENEWAL -- REPLACING DECAYING BUILDINGS AND NEIGHBORHOODS
WITH NEW ONES, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PRESERVING IMPORTANT
MONUMENTS OF THE PAST. AS A HISTORIAN, JOHN WRIGHT HAS
TAKEN AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN THIS:

TAPE: CUT EIGHT -- WRIGHT

"A CITY IS AN ORGANIC ENTITY, SO ITS ALWAYS CHANGING, ITS
ALWAYS GOING TO BE GROWING, CHANGING, ADAPTING TO
CONTEMPORARY TIMES AND PRESSURES AND NEEDS THAT IT HAS.
FOR EXAMPLE, THE WHOLE PATTERN OF SHIPPING IS CHANGING
RAPIDLY AND HAS CHANGED RAPIDLY SO WE DON'T SEE THE VOLUME
OF PASSENGER VESSELS WHICH USED TO COME SO COLORFULLY INTO

TAPE: HONOLULU HARBOR. AT THE SAME TIME THE STATE IS WORKING
(CONT'D) ON A PLAN TO REVITALIZE A GREAT DEAL OF THE WATERFRONT
AREA AND MAKE IT MORE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC AND MAKE IT
MORE ATTRACTIVE."
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NARR: FAR FROM THE HARBOR IS THE CIVIC CENTER, A SPACIOUS
PARK THAT CONTAINS OR IS BORDERED BY OLD AND NEW BUILDINGS.
THESE INCLUDE IOLANI PALACE WHICH HAWAIIANS BOAST IS THE
ONLY ROYAL PALACE IN THE UNITED STATES, DATING FROM THE
EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY WHEN HAWAII WAS STILL A FEUDAL
SOCIETY RULED BY A ROYAL FAMILY; AND ALSO KAWAIAHAO CHURCH
BUILT IN 1842 BY CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES FROM THE UNITED
STATES. MODERN GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS REPRESENT HAWAII'S
RECENT HISTORY, FIRST AS A REPUBLIC REQUESTING ANNEXATION
TO THE UNITED STATES, THEN SINCE 1958 WHEN IT BECAME THE
FIFTIETH STATE. NEARBY IN THE HARBOR, A FOUR MASTED
SAILING SHIP IS ANCHORED, RECALLING THE DAYS WHEN SUCH
SHIPS RULED THE OCEAN LANES.

AGAIN, HISTORIAN JOHN WRIGHT:

TAPE: CUT NINE -- WRIGHT

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"ONE CAN TAKE A HISTORIC STROLL THROUGH THAT PART OF THE
AREA. YOU CAN START DOWN AT THE HARBOR BY VISITING THE
FALLS OF CLYDE, A ONE HUNDRED YEAR OLD VESSEL WHICH BELONGS
TO THE BISHOP MUSEUM AND COME ON UP PAST THE NEW FEDERAL
BUILDING AND IMMEDIATELY COME INTO THE MISSION HOUSES COMPLEX
OF KAWAIAHAO CHURCH. SO YOU HAVE HISTORY THAT GOES BACK
(MORE THAN) ONE HUNDRED YEARS AND YOU CAN REALLY FOLLOW
IT THROUGH."

NARR: WHILE HONOLULU'S HISTORY IS AS VARIED AND INTERESTING AS
THE MANY PEOPLE WHO MADE IT, (FADE IN MUSIC) IT IS PROBABLY
ITS PHYSICAL BEAUTY THAT CONTINUES TO DRAW VISITORS TO ITS
SHORES -- THE SUN, THE SURF, THE NEARBY MOUNTAINS, FLOWERS
... AND OF COURSE, THE "ALOHA" SPIRIT.

TAPE: CUT TEN -- BRING UP MUSIC, HOLD AS DESIRED

RK/RD